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ANNUAL REPORT, 1981

Highlights of Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting

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INTRODUCTION

This report presents the highlights of officially reported child maltreatment in the United States in 1981 based on information made available to the National Study on Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting. The National Study is a project conducted by American Humane and funded through the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect of the Department of Health and Human Services.

Through the National Study, American Humane receives data from state information systems related to the nature and extent of reported child maltreatment. The derived information pertains to the characteristics of involved families, the type of maltreatment, sources of reports, and the nature of the response on the part of child protective services to reports. (Identifying information, e.g., names or addresses, is *not* collected.)

Since the first national analysis of reporting statistics was issued in 1976, this information has served to keep a diverse audience informed on the status of reported child maltreatment on a nationwide basis. In addition, special analyses of the data at the state and local levels have provided a useful tool to child protective services (CPS) administrators in evaluating their programs and in more informed decision-making on the provision of child protective services.

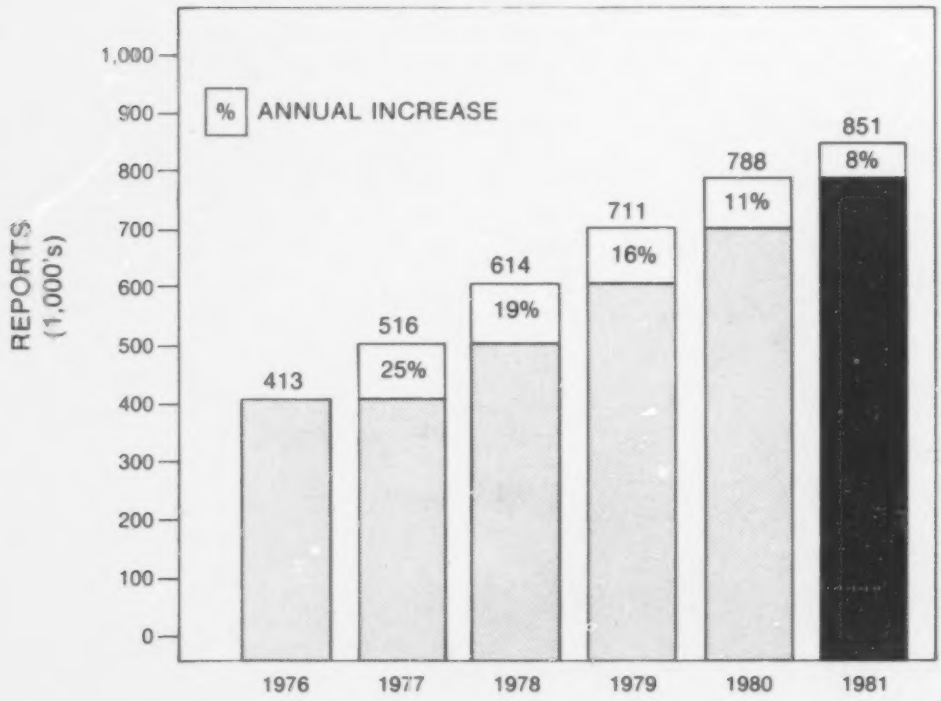
As a summary of reporting at the national level, this report presents only the general data categories. The data base of the National Study contains considerable detail for each category, and the information can be made available to interested persons. Inquiries about the availability of the data should be directed to American Humane.

OVERVIEW OF NATIONAL REPORTING

There were 850,980 reports of child abuse and neglect documented nationwide during 1981, which represents an increase of 106 percent since 1976. As can be seen in Figure 1, however, the *magnitude* of the increase from year to year is actually *decreasing*.

FIGURE 1

National Reporting Over Time



The apparent leveling off of reporting follows a period of rapid development of state reporting systems, during which the total number of reports was sensitive to the introduction of new state legislation or policy. For example, neglect was not considered a reportable condition in all jurisdictions until 1979. While state systems continue to change, the changes are more a matter of refinement in technology rather than addition of new reportable conditions.

INDIVIDUAL JURISDICTION REPORT TOTALS

Table 1 presents the total number of reports documented during 1981 by each of the U.S. jurisdictions. Unless indicated otherwise, these figures represent the number of families who were reported (as opposed to individual children), a combination of substantiated and unsubstantiated reports, and reports documented during calendar year 1981.

TABLE 1

1981 Jurisdiction Totals

Alabama	18,654[1]	Montana	5,243[1,3]
Alaska	7,748[2,3]	Nebraska	4,250
Arizona	4,783[4]	Nevada	3,851
Arkansas	8,723	New Hampshire	2,714
California	108,930	New Jersey	23,758[1,4]
Colorado	6,611	New Mexico	3,578
Connecticut	10,180[1,3]	New York	64,421
Delaware	2,873	North Carolina	16,374
District of Columbia	3,099	North Dakota	1,784
Florida	68,446[1,4]	Ohio	16,514[5]
Georgia	13,796[3]	Oklahoma	12,283[1,4]
Guam	205	Oregon	2,732[1,6]
Hawaii	2,635[1]	Pennsylvania	13,703[1]
Idaho	5,805	Puerto Rico	4,522
Illinois	28,840[3]	Rhode Island	2,293
Indiana	21,929[1,3]	South Carolina	11,690
Iowa	14,757	South Dakota	4,890[1]
Kansas	19,492[1]	Tennessee	26,755
Kentucky	17,131[3]	Texas	49,587
Louisiana	17,822[4]	Utah	5,832[1,3]
Maine	4,069	Vermont	1,256
Maryland	11,698	Virginia	39,685[1,3]
Massachusetts	18,500[3]	Virgin Islands	33
Michigan	34,688[3]	Washington	20,504
Minnesota	8,003	West Virginia	7,111[1]
Mississippi	3,564	Wisconsin	8,508[1]
Missouri	32,559	Wyoming	1,569
		TOTAL	**850,980**

[1] Represents individual child reports as opposed to family reports
[2] Represents a combination of adults and children involved in child protection cases
[3] Represents reports documented during the fiscal year as opposed to the calendar year
[4] Represents an estimate
[5] Represents total contained in the National Study data base
[6] Represents substantiated reports only

CASE DATA PARTICIPANTS

"Case data participants" refer to jurisdictions that provide individual case data to the National Study either via official reporting forms or magnetic data tape containing reporting form information. It is this information that serves as the data base used in the national analysis.*

In 1981, there were 37 case data participants. The distribution of reports across the case data participants is shown in Table 2. Note that the report totals in Table 2 may not correspond to those in Table 1 for some jurisdictions due to editing and other factors. Also, the totals in Table 2 embody the variation among jurisdictions with regard to reporting by family or by child, and they represent both substantiated and unsubstantiated reports.

Another point worth mentioning is that the total number of reports contained in the 1981 National Study data base represents half of all reports documented nationwide. Furthermore, the population of children living in the 37 jurisdictions that provided case data represents 70 percent of all children in the U.S. This suggests that the National Study reporting statistics are adequate with regard to representing the national profile of reported child maltreatment.

*For detailed information on the methods used by the National Study, the reader is referred to the *National Analysis of Official Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting*, 1980, American Humane, Denver, Colorado.

TABLE 2
Report Totals of Case Data Participants
(N = 420,216)

	TOTAL
Alaska	2,649*
Arizona	7,710
Arkansas	8,754
Colorado	5,446
Delaware	2,266
Dist. of Columbia	1,878
Florida	46,035*
Georgia	14,454
Hawaii	1,683
Illinois	32,023
Indiana	11,754
Iowa	14,062
Kentucky	7,779
Louisiana	11,094
Maine	2,781
Michigan	32,319
Minnesota	7,791
Mississippi	2,813
Missouri	28,432
Nebraska	1,497
Nevada	3,271
New Hampshire	2,136
New Mexico	3,578
New York	51,806
North Carolina	15,830
North Dakota	1,549
Ohio	16,514
Pennsylvania	13,653*
Rhode Island	809
South Carolina	11,690
Texas	29,660
Utah	4,651
Vermont	1,253
Virginia	14,253*
Wisconsin	6,299
Guam	6
Virgin Islands	38
TOTAL	**420,216**

*Represents individual child reports as opposed to family reports.

FINDINGS

Before presenting the findings, it is important to point out that for inclusion in any of the various analyses which follow, each state's data must meet systematically applied compatibility criteria. The criteria are applied so that the data included in each analysis will share a common definitional base. One consequence is that the "N" used in each figure or table varies as a function of the number of states included.* In addition, the particular data elements that constitute the various data categories are presented in the Appendix. The reader is encouraged to consult this listing while reading this report to facilitate understanding.

MONTH OF INITIAL REPORT

Table 3 shows the distribution of reports in the data base across the months based on the date the initial report was made.

TABLE 3
Month of Initial Report
(N = 420,216)

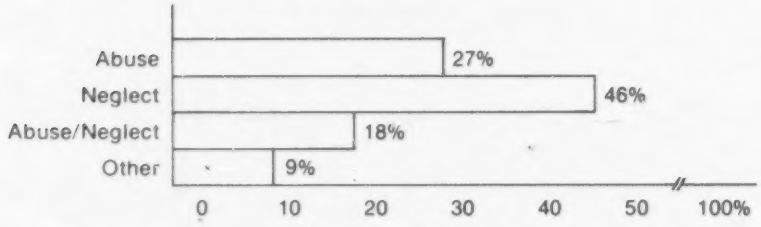
MONTH	PERCENT OF REPORTS
January	8.81
February	8.77
March	10.03
April	8.72
May	8.61
June	8.42
July	8.34
August	8.14
September	8.50
October	8.15
November	6.79
December	5.66
Unknown	1.00
Total	100.00

*There are certain features of reporting in general and of the National Study's methodology in particular that result in noticeably smaller "N's" for some data categories. An explanation of the factors involved is provided when deemed necessary.

TYPE OF REPORT

The "type of report" refers to how a report was classified at the time a referral or complaint was made. Figure 2 shows the distribution of reports across various report type categories. Note that the "other" category contains those reports that are not specified as "abuse", "neglect", or "abuse and neglect" and includes reports labeled as "at risk", which refers to cases where a child is believed to be at risk of maltreatment but no report type was specified.

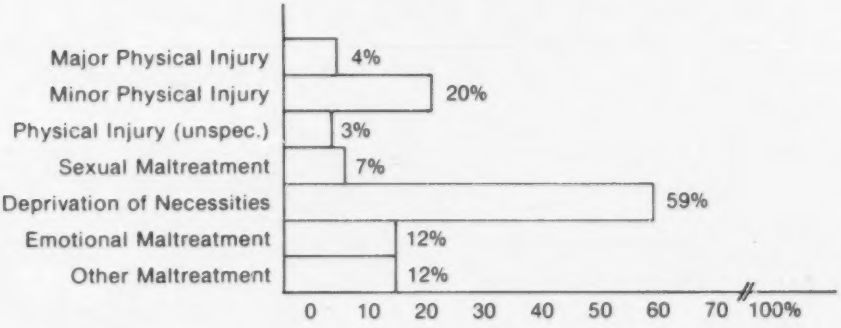
FIGURE 2
Type of Report
(N = 282,701)



TYPE OF MALTREATMENT

The "type of maltreatment" provides a description of the particular type of harm the child was reported to have experienced. Figure 3 shows the distribution of children for whom maltreatment information was available across categories of maltreatment. Note that because a child could have experienced more than one type of maltreatment, the total is greater than 100 percent.

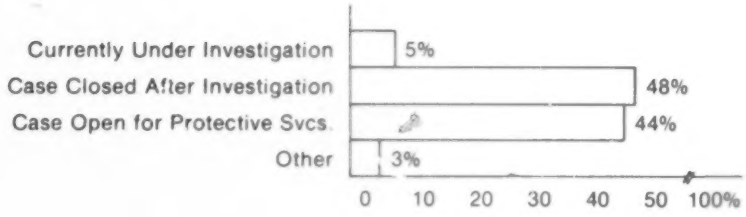
FIGURE 3
Type of Maltreatment
(N = 235,768)



CASE STATUS

After a family is reported to CPS, it is necessary to determine whether continued intervention on the part of CPS is warranted. An investigation of the case results in the determination of "case status", which serves to indicate whether a family remained involved with Child Protective Services. Figure 4 presents the distribution of reports across categories of case status. Note that "other status" includes "referred out for services other than protective", meaning that the referral was inappropriate for CPS, and "cannot locate" the family.

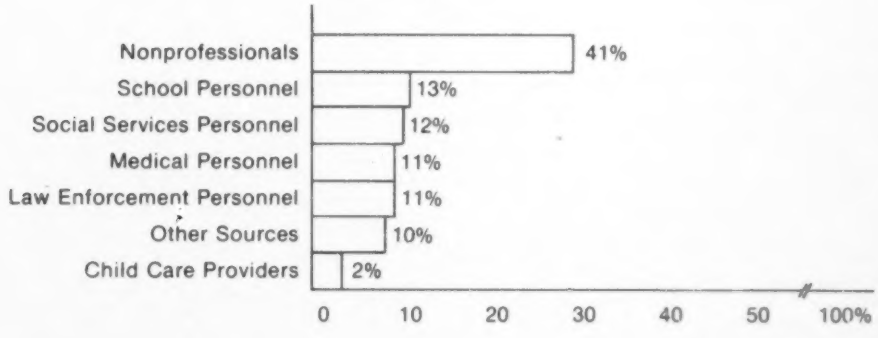
FIGURE 4
Case Status
(N = 151,426)



SOURCE OF REPORT

Figure 5 shows the distribution of reports across various categories of reporting sources. Note that "nonprofessionals" refers to, for example, neighbors, friends and relatives, and that "other" includes anonymous sources.

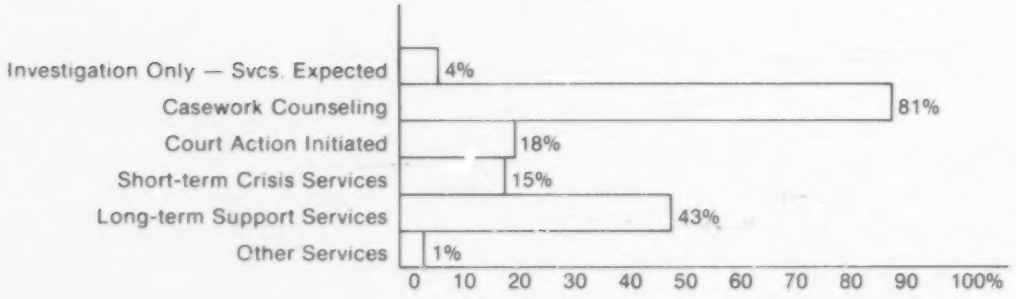
FIGURE 5
Source of Report
(N = 151,426)



SERVICES PROVIDED

Figure 6 shows the distribution of reports that indicated services across service categories. Because a report could have indicated more than one type of service, the total is greater than 100 percent. Also, the relatively small "N" used in this analysis is due to two factors. First, obviously only those reported cases that in fact received services can be represented. Second, for inclusion in the national distribution, the jurisdictions' services information must meet the relevant compatibility criteria. Sixteen of the 37 jurisdictions are represented in Figure 6, due to application of the compatibility criteria.

FIGURE 6
Services Provided
(N = 38,148)



The long-term category captures, among other things, substitutive or placement services. This was indicated for 12 percent of the reports that contained services data.

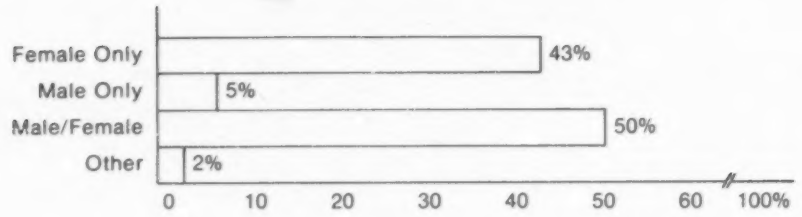
DESCRIPTION OF INVOLVED FAMILIES

Caretaker Composition

Figure 8 shows the caretaker composition of families reported for maltreatment. A caretaker is defined as an adult who has responsibility for a child on a 24 hour a day, seven day a week basis. Note that the "other" category refers to "female/female" and "male/male".*

*For the reader's information, 14 percent of all families in the U.S. were headed by a single female caretaker. Families with both a male and female caretaker accounted for 83 percent (1980 Census).

FIGURE 7
Caretaker Composition
(N = 201, 537)



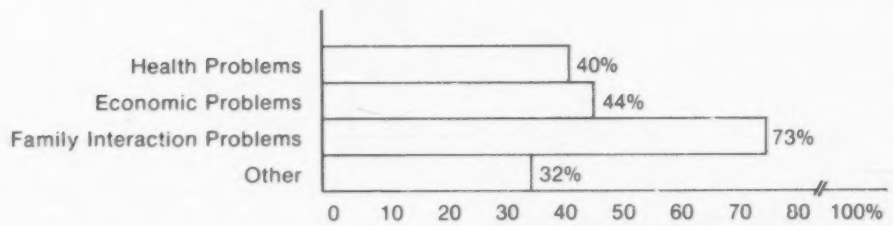
Public Assistance Status

The data revealed that based on 117,183 reports, 43 percent of the reported families were receiving some form of public assistance; 57 percent were not.*

Family Stress Factors

Figure 8 shows the distribution of reports across categories of stress factors. Because a report could have indicated more than one category of stress, the total is greater than 100 percent. Also, the relatively small number of reports used in Figure 8 is a function of first the fact that most jurisdictions do not provide stress factor information for unfounded cases. Second, due to application of compatibility criteria, 21 of the 37 jurisdictions were included in this analysis.

FIGURE 8
Stress Factors
(N = 84,465)



*According to the Census Bureau, 11 percent of all U.S. households were receiving public assistance.

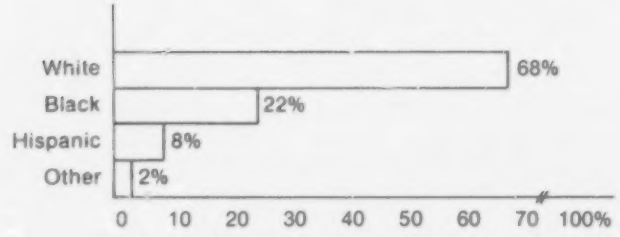
Caretaker Employment Status

Based on 26,730 reports, the data revealed that in 40 percent of the reported families, there was no caretaker currently employed.* In 56 percent of the families, at least one caretaker was employed full-time but one or both had an "other" employment status, such as part-time employment. Also, the relatively small "N" is due to availability of employment status from only 8 of the 37 jurisdictions.

Age, Sex, and Race of Involved Children

The average age of the involved children was 7.2 years.** Males and females were equally represented. Figure 9 shows the distribution of involved children across race categories.***

FIGURE 9
Race of Involved Children
(487,090)



Involved Child Relationship to Caretakers and Perpetrators

Based on 193,309 children, the data revealed that 98 percent of the involved child-caretaker relationships were "parental", less than 3 percent were "other relative" and less than one percent were not related.

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*For the reader's information, the national unemployment rate for families with children under 18 was 13 percent (unpublished Bureau of Labor Statistics data).

**The average age of all children in the U.S. was 8.8 (1980 Census).

***The relative distribution of reported children across race corresponds to the distribution of all children in the U.S. across race. However, the actual percentages cannot be compared because the census data do not reflect a distinction between Hispanic and Black and White, whereas the data received by the National Study do.

Of the 154,226 child-perpetrator relationships for which data were available, 95 percent were "parental", 4 percent were "other relative" and slightly over 2 percent were not related.

The above percentages slightly exceed 100 percent because a child could have had more than one type of caretaker or perpetrator relationship.

FATALITIES

The National Study received data related to fatalities from 25 of the 54 jurisdictions. This means that the total number of children who were reported to have died as a result of maltreatment in 1981 is not available to this study.* However, the information related to the characteristics of the 585 fatalities included in the data base is informative.

Reports involving fatalities came primarily from medical personnel (38 percent) followed by law enforcement personnel (28 percent). Social services personnel and nonprofessionals each accounted for about 11 percent; "other" sources such as "anonymous" accounted for 6 percent; school personnel, for 4 percent and child care, for less than 1 percent.

The involved families were only slightly more likely to be headed by both a male and female caretaker than was characteristic of all reported families (53 percent vs 50 percent). The perpetrators were most likely to be the child's parents (94 percent).

The average age of children reported as fatalities was much lower than all reported children — 3.3 years compared to 7.2 years. Males and females were fairly equally represented — 51 percent and 49 percent, respectively.

Deprivation of necessities was the most frequently indicated type of maltreatment (56 percent) followed by major physical injury (34 percent).

*Limitations of information sources makes identification of the actual number of child maltreatment fatalities particularly problematic. There are estimates that have been made through, for example, use of the FBI data base and the National Study on the Incidence and Severity of Child Abuse and Neglect. The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCCAN) is addressing the issue of child maltreatment fatalities in its 1983 priorities through support of fatality inquiry committees.

SELECTED ISSUES RELATED TO REPORTED MALTREATMENT

This section presents the results of some of the cross tabulations generated as part of the annual statistical output. They serve to both illustrate the type of information that is made possible by analyzing reporting statistics as well as to further describe the nature of reported maltreatment.

The reader will note a category on Table 4 (and other subsequent tables) called "major or major with minor physical injury". This represents cases where a type of major physical injury was indicated *either* alone *or* in combination with a type of minor physical injury. The same approach to categorization applies to "minor or unspecified physical injury". All other combinations of maltreatment types are included in the "multiple maltreatment" category.

TYPE OF MALTREATMENT AND INVOLVED CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO CARETAKER-PERPETRATOR

Table 4 shows the differences among the types of perpetrators with respect to the type of maltreatment in which they are likely to be involved. For example, deprivation of necessities was the most frequently indicated type of maltreatment for natural parents. For step/adoptive/foster parents, it was minor or unspecified physical injury. It is also particularly noteworthy that sexual maltreatment was disproportionately represented for step/adoptive/foster parents relative to the other relationship types.

TABLE 4
TYPE OF MALTREATMENT AND
INVOLVED CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO CARETAKER-PERPETRATOR*
(N = 65,399)

TYPE OF MALTREATMENT	NATURAL PARENT (N = 55,466)	STEP/ADOPTIVE/ FOSTER PARENT (N = 3,426)	NATURAL PARENT AND STEP/ ADOPTIVE PARENT (N = 4,024)	OTHER RELATIONSHIPS (N = 2,483)
Major or Major w/Minor Physical Injury	2%	3%	2%	2%
Minor or Unspecified Physical Injury	13%	34%	16%	17%
Sexual Maltreatment	2%	25%	4%	5%
Deprivation of Necessities	56%	9%	40%	43%
Emotional Maltreatment	8%	11%	13%	9%
Other Maltreatment	2%	1%	1%	1%
Multiple Maltreatment	17%	17%	24%	23%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%

* Refers to caretakers who were also indicated as the perpetrators.

PERPETRATOR SEX AND TYPE OF MALTREATMENT

Table 5 shows the distributions of both male and female perpetrators across type of maltreatment. The distributions are fairly similar with the two major exceptions of sexual maltreatment and deprivation of necessities. That male perpetrators are more often involved in sexual maltreatment needs no elaboration. That females are more often involved in deprivation of necessities is largely related to the fact that over 40 percent of reported families are headed by a single female caretaker, a situation often associated with limited personal and financial resources and social isolation.

TABLE 5
TYPE OF MALTREATMENT AND PERPETRATOR SEX
(N = 134,392)

TYPE OF MALTREATMENT	MALE PERPETRATORS (N = 51,453)	FEMALE PERPETRATORS (N = 82,939)
Major or Major w/Minor Physical Injury	2%	2%
Minor or Unspecified Physical Injury	20%	13%
Sexual Maltreatment	12%	1%
Deprivation of Necessities	28%	45%
Emotional Maltreatment	6%	5%
Other Maltreatment	4%	6%
Multiple Maltreatment	28%	27%
TOTAL	100%	100%

AGE OF INVOLVED CHILD AND TYPE OF MALTREATMENT

Table 6 shows both the distribution of children by age across type of maltreatment as well as the age distribution of all involved children across maltreatment. In addition, the distribution of all children in the U.S. across age is provided for comparison.

TABLE 6
AGE OF INVOLVED CHILD AND TYPE OF MALTREATMENT
(N = 228,794)

AGE	MAJOR OR MAJOR w/MINOR PHYSICAL INJURY (N = 7,245)	MINOR OR UNSPECIFIED PHYSICAL INJURY (N = 38,389)	SEXUAL MAL-TREATMENT (N = 13,681)	DEPRIVATION OF NECESSITIES (N = 107,530)	EMOTIONAL MAL-TREATMENT (N = 12,984)	OTHER MAL-TREATMENT (N = 12,748)	MULTIPLE MAL-TREATMENT (N = 36,217)	PERCENT OF ALL INVOLVED CHILDREN (N = 228,794)	GENERAL U.S. CHILD POPULATION (N=63,140,000)
Less than 1 year	15%	4%	<1%	9%	4%	12%	6%	7%	6%
1	15%	6%	1%	9%	5%	8%	7%	8%	6%
2	12%	7%	2%	8%	6%	8%	8%	8%	5%
3	8%	7%	4%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	5%
4	6%	6%	5%	7%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%
5	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	6%	6%	5%
6	4%	6%	5%	7%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%
7	4%	6%	5%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%	5%
8	3%	5%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%	5%
9	3%	5%	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	5%	5%
10	3%	5%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	5%	6%
11	3%	5%	7%	5%	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%
12	3%	5%	8%	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%
13	3%	5%	9%	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%	6%
14	3%	6%	9%	3%	7%	5%	5%	5%	6%
15	4%	6%	9%	3%	6%	4%	5%	4%	6%
16	3%	5%	7%	2%	5%	4%	4%	3%	6%
17	2%	2%	4%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	7%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

It is possible to identify some clear trends which are consistent with what one would expect given different levels or types of vulnerability of children at different ages. For example, major physical injury is concentrated among the very young children. Also, deprivation of necessities declines with age, whereas sexual maltreatment increases with age. Perhaps one of the most important features of this table, though, is the clear message that children of all ages are vulnerable to all types of maltreatment.

SOURCE OF REPORT AND CASE STATUS

According to the data related to case status, 48 percent of all reports indicated "closed after the investigation". However, as Table 7 demonstrates, there are differences with regard to determination of case status when the various groups of reporting sources are viewed individually. For example, only 39 percent of cases reported by law enforcement personnel were closed after the investigation; compared to "other" sources (largely anonymous sources), where 75 percent were closed. The differences seen among the various sources very likely reflect differences in knowledge about the indicators of maltreatment, in the circumstances under which a maltreated child is seen, and in the type and severity of maltreatment typically seen in the course of contact with families. For example, the police are more likely to be called in the more serious, and therefore, perhaps more "obvious" cases, so that their reports to CPS are more likely to result in CPS intervention.

TABLE 7
CASE STATUS AND SOURCE OF REPORT
(N = 110,768)

CASE STATUS	MEDICAL PERSONNEL (N = 10,965)	SCHOOL PERSONNEL (N = 13,923)	SOCIAL SERVICES (N = 13,104)	LAW ENFORCEMENT (N = 11,602)	CHILD CARE (N = 2,949)	NON-PROFESSIONALS (N = 48,354)	OTHER (N = 9,871)
Currently Under Investigation	3%	4%	4%	4%	8%	3%	2%
Case Closed After Investigation	45%	45%	50%	39%	51%	60%	75%
Protective Services	49%	48%	42%	54%	40%	34%	21%
Other	3%	3%	4%	3%	1%	3%	2%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

CASE STATUS AND TYPE OF MALTREATMENT

As demonstrated by Table 8, not all cases where a maltreatment type was documented are opened for protective services. In addition, there appears to be variation with regard to the type of maltreatment and the likelihood of services being provided. For example, cases involving minor physical injury were least likely to receive services relative to the other types of malteatment, and cases involving "other" types which includes abandonment, were most likely to do so.

TABLE 8
CASE STATUS AND TYPE OF MALTREATMENT
(N = 81,674)

CASE STATUS	MAJOR OR MAJOR w/MINOR PHYSICAL INJURY (N = 2,272)	MINOR OR UNSPECIFIED PHYSICAL INJURY (N = 12,913)	SEXUAL MAL-TREATMENT (N = 4,641)	DEPRIVATION OF NECESSITIES (N = 41,120)	EMOTIONAL MAL-TREATMENT (N = 6,091)	OTHER MAL-TREATMENT (N = 1,536)	MULTIPLE MAL-TREATMENT (N = 13,101)
Currently Under Investigation	6%	6%	5%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Case Closed After Investigation	24%	25%	13%	21%	13%	5%	13%
Protective Services Provided	66%	63%	79%	68%	80%	91%	78%
Other	4%	6%	3%	6%	5%	1%	6%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

SUMMARY

The number of child abuse and neglect reports processed by child protective service agencies in 1981 was 850,980. This constitutes an increase of 106 percent since the first national analysis of reporting statistics was issued in 1976. However, the rate of increase in reporting from 1976 to 1981 has steadily declined.

The National Study data base for 1981 was drawn from official reporting forms or magnetic data tape provided by 37 jurisdictions. Of the 850,980 official reports in 1981, 420,216 or 50 percent are in the National Study computerized data base. These reports provide the basis for the National analysis.

CHARACTERISTICS OF INVOLVED FAMILIES AND CHILDREN

Forty-three percent of the families reported in 1981 were receiving some form of public assistance compared to 11 percent nationwide. A large number of reported families (43%) were headed by single female caretakers *vs* 14 percent of all families in the U.S. Many reported families experienced problems related to economic stress (44%), poor health (40%), and family interaction (73%). Of those reports which indicated caretaker employment status, 40 percent reported that no caretaker was employed in any capacity, *vs* a nationwide unemployment rate for families of 13 percent.

The average age of the involved children was 7.2 years compared to 8.8 of all children in the U.S. Males and females were represented equally. The majority of involved children were white (68%) followed by black at 22%, and Hispanic at 8%. Ninety-five percent of the reports indicated that the child-perpetrator relationships were "parental", four percent were "other relative" and just over two percent were not related.

REPORTING SOURCES

In 1981, 41 percent of all reports came from nonprofessionals. School personnel followed with 13 percent, social service personnel with 12 percent and medical and law enforcement personnel with 11 percent each. The smallest number of reports in 1981 were received from child care providers, who accounted for two percent of all reports.

MALTREATMENT

Neglect or deprivation of necessities was the major form of maltreatment reported (59%) in 1981. It was also associated with 56 percent of the fatalities. Twenty percent of all involved children were reported to have experienced minor physical injury; 12 percent emotional maltreatment; 7 percent sexual maltreatment and 4 percent major physical injury.

CASE STATUS AND SERVICES

In 1981, 48 percent of the cases reported were closed after the investigation; 44 percent were "open for protective services" and 5 percent were "currently under investigation".

Casework counseling was the most frequently provided service. Fighty-one percent of the cases opened for services received casework counseling; 43 percent received some type of long-term support services; court action was initiated in 18 percent of the cases, and short-term crisis services were provided in 15 percent of the cases. Four percent of the cases reported indicated that the only activity which had occurred was the investigation by the protective services caseworker, however, services were expected or planned.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

An important reason to examine official reporting statistics is that they provide a description of the child maltreatment problem as it is perceived and dealt with by the child protective services system. This profile can then serve as one basis for assessing the appropriateness of existing policy related to the planning for and provision of services.

For example, when the data related to caretaker composition, public assistance status and employment status are considered together, it is possible to delineate a significant subpopulation of families who became involved with CPS. Specifically, over 40 percent of all reported families are headed by a single female caretaker who depends on public assistance. This supports the notion that there is a strong association between the stresses of poverty and the inability to adequately care for children. The problem is that the CPS system is neither equipped nor intended to alleviate poverty. Therefore, the focus of policy related to remediation of child maltreatment should be broadened to incorporate the reality of poverty. The reporting data revealed that the predominant service type was casework counseling; specific support services were indicated much less frequently. At minimum, a refocusing of policy might lead to more effective integration of social service programs.

A significant issue is that the majority of children (60 percent) seen by CPS were reported as experiencing deprivation of necessities or neglect. It is commonly thought that neglect is less "serious" than other forms of maltreatment. Consequently, in a time when CPS agencies are being forced to limit their response to cases perceived as the most serious*, neglect cases are likely to be among the first to be screened out. This poses a serious dilemma. It is clear that in its present form the CPS system cannot accommodate all children reported as maltreated, so perhaps it is necessary to screen cases out. However, it was neglect that was the most frequently indicated type of maltreatment for fatalities. Furthermore, the proportion of deprivation of necessities indications associated with fatalities increased between 1980 and 1981 from 43 percent to 56 percent. This serves as one reason why it is essential that as screening policies are developed they are implemented with the greatest of care and consistency.**

*"Impact of Federal Cutbacks on State and Community Responses to Child Abuse", National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, a paper presented at the American Public Health Association meeting, November, 1982, Montreal.

**Another issue emerges when the findings of this study are viewed in light of those of the National Study of the Incidence and Severity of Child Abuse and Neglect.

The National Incidence Study uncovered a distinct population of children who, though clearly identifiable as maltreated according to the study's criteria, were unknown to the official child protection structure. These children tended to be older, essentially preadolescent and adolescent. They tended more often to be white and to live in two-caretaker families. The underreporting of this group is an issue that warrants careful investigation since these children do fall under the purview of state child protection legislation. ("The National Study on Child Neglect and Abuse Reporting and The National Study of the Incidence and Severity of Child Abuse and Neglect: A Comparative Analysis", American Humane, 1982).

Another reason to deal with the issue of screening cases out from a policy perspective is that for a significant number of families (48 percent), CPS involvement ceased after the investigation. Presumably, this occurred in most cases because the investigation revealed no evidence of maltreatment. Not only does this situation represent a large and costly investment of CPS agency staff resources, it also raises ethical and legal questions pertaining to invasion of privacy. It is presumed that in many of these cases there were indications of maltreatment, but it wasn't deemed serious enough at that time for continued intervention. The national data presented here represent the extreme variation among state CPS agencies with respect to intake procedures, from investigating every report to investigating only those that seem most pressing at the time. It is worthwhile to reiterate the need for clear and consistent policy regarding appropriateness of CPS intervention.

Finally, there has been a significant change in CPS's experience with child maltreatment. Between 1976 and 1981, the total number of reports documented nationwide has more than doubled. On the one hand, this represents considerable progress in elevating the public's awareness of the problem, in the development of state's reporting systems, and in expanding at least the opportunity for protection to many, many more children. On the other hand, it also represents a significant increase in caseloads and an increased strain on already limited agency budgets.

It has been widely agreed that much of the increase to date in reporting can be attributed to "uncovering" and counting what has always been there rather than reflecting an actual increase in the extent of the problem. The decreasing rate at which the number of reports has increased between 1976 and 1981 provides support for this conclusion.

Of grave concern is the *current* situation. There is some evidence of an increase in the number of serious cases that are being seen by CPS agencies.* Trends relating to both the qualitative and the quantitative aspects of the child maltreatment problem need to be monitored closely to support efforts to maintain the most basic level of protection for maltreated children.

*"Impact of Federal Cutbacks on State and Community Responses to Child Abuse", National Committee for Prevention of Child Abuse, a paper presented at the American Public Health Association meeting, November, 1982, Montreal.

APPENDIK

Data Items and Response Categories for the
National Study Data Base

DATA ITEMS AND RESPONSE CATEGORIES FOR
NATIONAL STUDY DATA BASE

Case and Family Descriptors

A. DATE OF INITIAL REPORT

1. Date

B. DATE CASE STATUS DETERMINED

1. Date

C. LOCATION

1. State or statecode
2. County or countycode
3. District code

D. NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN HOME

1. Number

E. SOURCE OF INITIAL REPORT

1. Medical personnel
   a. Private physician
   b. Clinic or hospital physician
   c. Other medical personnel
   d. Unspecified/mixed school personnel

2. School personnel
   a. School nurse
   b. Teacher
   c. Principal
   d. Other school personnel
   e. Unspecified/mixed medical personnel

3. Social service personnel

   a. Social worker
   b. Mental health personnel
   c. Institutional staff
   d. Other social service personnel
   e. Unspecified/mixed social service personnel

4. Law enforcement personnel

a. Police
b. Courts, attorneys
c. Parole, probation officer
d. Emergency service personnel
e. Other law enforcement personnel
f. Unspecified/mixed law enforcement personnel

5. Nonprofessionals

a. Friend, neighbor
b. Victim
c. Responsible caretaker
d. Perpetrator/self report
e. Other family member/relative
f. Other nonprofessionals
g. Unspecified/mixed nonprofessionals

6. Child care providers

a. Day care center
b. Preschool/nursery school
c. Day care home
d. Babysitter
e. Other child care providers
f. Unspecified/mixed child care providers

7. Other source of report

a. Anonymous
b. Other
c. Unspecified/mixed source of report

8. Unknown

F. CASE STATUS

1. Currently under investigation
2. Case closed after investigation
3. Protective services provided
4. Other case status

a. Case referred for services other than protective
b. Cannot locate family
c. Other
d. Unspecified/mixed case status

5. Unknown

G. SERVICES PROVIDED OR ARRANGED (maximum of four responses are allowed per report)

1. Investigation only--services expected/planned
2. Casework counseling
3. Court action initiated
4. Immediate or short-term crisis services

    a. Emergency shelter care
    b. Immediate medical services
    c. Unspecified/mixed short-term crisis services

5. Long-term or support services

    a. Foster care of out-of-home placement
    b. Ongoing health services
    c. Day care
    d. Homemaker services
    e. Budgeting/home management services
    f. Mental health services/counseling
    g. Employment services
    h. Housing assistance
    i. Parents Anonymous or community self-help groups
    j. Legal services
    k. Parenting education
    l. Church/neighborhood assistance
    m. Financial/public assistance
    n. Unspecified/mixed long-term support services

6. Other services
    a. Other
    b. Unspecified/mixed services provided or
    c. arranged

7. Family refused services
8. None
9. Unknown

H. TYPE OF REPORT

1. Abuse

    a. Abuse unsubstantiated
    b. Abuse substantiated
    c. Abuse-substantiation unspecified

2. Neglect

    a. Neglect unsubstantiated
    b. Neglect substantiated
    c. Neglect-substantiation unspecified

3. Abuse and neglect

a. Abuse/neglect unsubstantiated
b. Abuse/neglect substantiated
c. Abuse/neglect-substantiation unspecified

4. Report type unspecified

a. Unsubstantiated, report type unspecified
b. Substantiated, report type unspecified
c. Nonspecified substantiation and report type

5. Other report type

a. At risk
b. Other

6. Unknown

I. FAMILY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE STATUS (a maximum of three responses are allowed)

1. Receiving public assistance

a. Receiving AFDC
b. Receiving SSI
c. Receiving food stamps
d. Receiving Medicaid, Medicare
e. Receiving WIN
f. Receiving other public assistance
g. Receiving unspecified/mixed public assistance

2. Not receiving public assistance
3. Unknown

J. FAMILY STRESS FACTORS (a maximum of six responses are allowed for each case)

1. Health problems

a. Alcohol/drug dependency
b. Medical/physical disability of caretaker
c. Medical/physical disability of child
d. Mental retardation of caretaker
e. Mental retardation of child
f. Mental/emotional health problem of caretaker
g. Mental/emotional health problem of child
h. Other health problems
i. Unspecified/mixed health problems

2. Economic or physical living conditions

a. Inadequate housing

b. Social isolation
c. Job-related problems
d. Insufficient income
e. Transient or unstable living situation
f. Mismanagement of income
g. Other economic or physical living condition problems
h. Unspecified/mixed economic or physical living conditions

3. Family interaction problems

a. Spouse abuse
b. Chronic family violence
c. Inability to cope with parenting responsibility
d. Marital problems/instability
e. New baby/pregnancy
f. Disruption of family structure due to death/absence of family member
g. Other family interaction problems
h. Unspecified/mixed family interaction problems

4. Other stress factors

a. Other
b. Unspecified/mixed stress factors

5. None
6. Unknown

Responsible Caretaker and Perpetrator Descriptors

A. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER AGE

1. Age in years

B. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER SEX

1. Male
2. Female
3. Unknown

C. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER RACE

1 White
2. Black

3. Hispanic
4. Other race

a. Asian

b. Native American
c. Alaskan Native
d. Other
e. Unspecified/mixed other race

5. Unknown

D. RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER EMPLOYMENT STATUS

1. Employed full-time
2. Unemployed
3. Other employment status

a. Employed less than full-time
b. Temporary employment
c. Student, not in labor force
d. Homemaker, not in labor force
e. Disabled, not in labor force
f. Other
g. Unspecified/mixed other employment status

4. Unknown

E. PERPETRATOR AGE

1. Age in years

F. PERPETRATOR SEX

1. Male
2. Female
3. Unknown

G. PERPETRATOR RACE

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Other race

a. Asian
b. Native American
c. Alaskan Native
d. Other
e. Unspecified/mixed other race

5. Unknown

Child Data

A. CHILD AGE

1. Age in years

B. CHILD SEX

1. Male
2. Female
3. Unknown

C. CHILD RACE

1. White
2. Black
3. Hispanic
4. Other race

    a. Asian
    b. Native American
    c. Alaskan Native
    d. Other
    e. Unspecified/mixed other race

5. Unknown

D. CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO RESPONSIBLE CARETAKER

1. Parental

    a. Natural
    b. Step
    c. Adoptive
    d. Foster
    e. Unspecified/mixed parental relationship

2. Other relative

    a. Sibling
    b. Grandchild
    c. Other relative
    d. Unspecified/mixed other relative

3. Other relationship

    a. Boyfriend/girlfriend of parent
    b. State institution
    c. Private institution
    d. Other
    e. Unspecified/mixed other caretaker relationship

4. Unknown

E. CHILD RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR

1. Parental

   a. Natural
   b. Step
   c. Adoptive
   d. Foster
   e. Unspecified/mixed parental relationship

2. Other relative

   a. Sibling
   b. Grandchild
   c. Othe relative
   d. Unspecified/mixed other relative

3. Other relationship

   a. Boyfriend/girlfriend of parent
   b. State institutional staff
   c. Private institutional staff
   d. Babysitter
   e. Teacher
   f. Neighbor/friend of parent
   g. No relationship
   h. Other
   i. Unspecified/mixed other perpetrator relationship

4. Unknown

TYPE OF MALTREATMENT (maximum of five responses are allowed for each child)

1. Major physical injury

   a. Brain damage/skull fracture
   b. Subdural hemorrhage or hematoma
   c. Bone fracture
   d. Dislocation/sprains
   e. Internal injuries
   f. Poisoning
   g. Burns/scalds
   h. Severe cuts/lacerations/bruises
   i. Other major physical injury
   h. Other major physical injury
   i. Other major physical injury
   j. Unspecified/mixed major physical injuries

2. Minor physical injury

   a. Minor cuts/bruises/welts

b. Twisting/shaking
c. Other minor injury
d. Unspecified/mixed minor physical injuries

3. Physical injury, severity unspecified

a. Unspecified/mixed physical injury

4. Sexual maltreatment

a. Incest
b. Exploitation
c. Rape/intercourse
d. Molestation
e. Other sexual maltreatment
f. Unspecified/mixed sexual maltreatment

5. Deprivation of necessities

a. Neglecting to provide nourishment
b. Neglecting to provide shelter
c. Neglecting to provide clothing
d. Neglecting to provide health care
e. Failure to thrive
f. Lack of supervision
g. Educational neglect
h. Unspecified/mixed deprivation of necessities

6. Emotional maltreatment

a. Emotional abuse
b. Emotional neglect
c. Unspecified/mixed emotional maltreatment

7. Other maltreatment

a. Abandonment
b. Other
c. Unspecified/mixed maltreatment

8. No maltreatment
9. Noninvolved child
10. Unknown

G. FATALITY

1. Fatal
2. Nonfatal
3. Unknown